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Letter dated 28 April 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Further to my report on the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) of 6 January 2016 (S/2016/11), I have the honour to write to you on the subject of confidence-building measures, and the supporting role played by UNFICYP in that regard, both of which the Security Council has welcomed (see resolution 2263 (2016)). As detailed in the aforementioned report, UNFICYP is lending important assistance, especially in the area of demining.

I am grateful for the strong support of the Security Council in 2015 by endorsing and subsequently prolonging the inter-mission cooperation arrangement between UNFICYP and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) (see S/2015/495 and S/2015/661). The temporary deployment, under the facilitation of UNFICYP, of a UNIFIL mine-clearance team from Cambodia from May to November 2015 allowed for hazardous materials to be cleared, minefields to be declared as posing no threat and the way to be paved for the opening of crossing points. Importantly, the initiative helped to build trust between the leaders at a critical juncture, and confidence among the wider public in the prospects for a settlement.

There are several remaining known mined areas in Cyprus, including four within the buffer zone. I therefore propose the establishment of a standing inter-mission cooperation arrangement between the two missions, for an initial period of a year and within the authorized military strength of UNIFIL, fully recognizing that the unit would remain primarily a UNIFIL asset. This would allow for rapid and flexible deployment to Cyprus on a short-term and occasional basis, as required, subject to the operational needs of UNIFIL in its area of operations.

I should be grateful for the concurrence of the Security Council in order for such an agreement to be formalized, based on the modalities of the successful deployment in 2014 and 2015 of a Cambodian demining team from UNIFIL.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) BAN Ki-moon

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